



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WALTER REED ARMY INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH  
WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20307-5100

MCMR-UWZ  
SER 00

1 August 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR Researchers Using Animal Subjects, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR) and Naval Medical Research Center (NMRC)

SUBJECT: Commanders' Statement on Animal Care and Use

1. Walter Reed Army Institute of Research's and Naval Medical Research Center's reliance on animal models to support our research and development (R&D) programs has been and will continue to be vital to the success of our missions. We all must recognize that the use of animals in R&D is a privilege that entails considerable responsibility to ensure the health and well being of those animals while they are under our stewardship. Current law requires humane care and use of animals, as codified in the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), and other applicable Federal statutes. DoD Directive adopts the AWA as the standard for animal care and use and requires that the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care, International, accredit all research laboratories that use animals. Research conducted in DoD facilities must therefore comply with all applicable laws, regulations, standards and guidelines, applying the most stringent requirement whenever policies differ. Beyond these legal requirements is the practical understanding that anything less than the best humane care and use of animals jeopardizes the scientific validity of any data obtained. And finally, absent any of the above stipulations, personal ethics alone requires we each treat animals that are dependent upon us in a manner that promotes their welfare to the greatest degree possible.

2. Two groups act as our representatives at WRAIR and NMRC to ensure the above. The first is the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC); the second is the Division of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) professional staff. The IACUC, comprised of scientists from each Division or Directorate using animals, veterinarians, lay people and community representatives, provides oversight of the animal care and use program in order to achieve the necessary balance between the requirements of the law, the needs of the scientists, and the concerns of the community. The DVM staff, also composed of both WRAIR and NMRC elements, is directly responsible for ensuring that animal husbandry, health, and welfare issues are addressed with the dedication and intensity they demand. Both groups do far more than ensure compliance with the various policies and regulations that govern animal research. They provide extensive support to our scientific community by providing consultation on development of research protocols, conducting training seminars, developing and disseminating educational and reference materials (such as the Investigator's Handbook and the IACUC website), providing hands-on training with respect to routine animal care and use procedures, and by ensuring more extensive training with respect to particular procedures upon request.

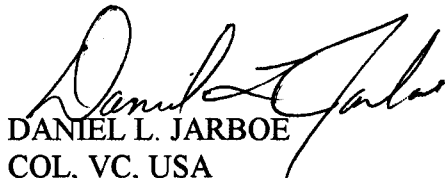
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3. These groups primarily act by promoting proper practices and by routinely inspecting the facilities and animal care and use program to identify potential deficiencies and to suggest corrective action before those deficiencies become significant. However, they also are empowered to suspend research protocols that fail to address significant concerns once identified.

4. We ask that each of you join us in adopting a position of personal ethics and commitment to conduct scientific research that promotes animal welfare and ensures compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, standards and guidelines. Utilize the Investigator's Handbook and the website as resources to develop the highest standard of animal care and use, and utilize the IACUC and DVM staff as additional resources when the information contained therein is insufficient for your needs. Developing and maintaining proper animal welfare in modern biomedical research requires a team approach involving efforts by scientists, veterinarians, technicians, animal care staff, institutional officials, and the IACUC. Together, we hope to provide a facility in which your work as scientists will be professionally rewarding as well as ethically responsible.



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